

THE WORKS OF
ALFRED TENNYSON.

MAUD, AND ENOCH ARDEN.

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M A U D.

PART I.

MAUD.

I.

I.

I HATE the dreadful hollow behind the little wood,
Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red
heath,
The red-ribb'd ledges drip with a silent horror of
blood,
And Echo there, whatever is ask'd her, answers
'Death.'

II.

For there in the ghastly pit long since a body was
found,
His who had given me life—O father! O God! was
it well?—

Mangled, and flatten'd, and crush'd, and dinted into
the ground :
There yet lies the rock that fell with him when he fell.

III.

Did he fling himself down? who knows? for a vast
speculation had fail'd,
And ever he mutter'd and madden'd, and ever wann'd
with despair,
And out he walk'd when the wind like a broken
worldling wail'd,
And the flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove
thro' the air.

IV.

I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were
stirr'd
By a shuffled step, by a dead weight trail'd, by a
whisper'd fright,
And my pulses closed their gates with a shock on my
heart as I heard
The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the shud-
dering night.

V.

Villainy somewhere! whose? One says, we are
villains all.

Not he: his honest fame should at least by me
be maintained:
But that old man, now lord of the broad estate
and the Hall,
Dropt off gorged from a scheme that had left us
flaccid and drain'd.

VI.

Why do they prate of the blessings of Peace?
we have made them a curse,
Pickpockets, each hand lusting for all that is not
its own;
And lust of gain, in the spirit of Cain, is it better
or worse
Than the heart of the citizen hissing in war on
his own hearthstone?

VII.

But these are the days of advance, the works of
the men of mind,
When who but a fool would have faith in a trades-
man's ware or his word?
Is it peace or war? Civil war, as I think, and that
of a kind
The viler, as underhand, not openly bearing the
sword.

VIII.

Sooner or later I too may passively take the print
Of the golden age—why not? I have neither hope
nor trust;
May make my heart as a millstone, set my face as a
flint,
Cheat and be cheated, and die: who knows? we are
ashes and dust.

IX.

Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the days
gone by,
When the poor are hovell'd and hustled together, each
sex, like swine,
When only the ledger lives, and when only not all
men lie;
Peace in her vineyard—yes!—but a company forges
the wine.

X.

And the vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's
head,
Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the trampled
wife,
And chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor
for bread
And the spirit of murder works in the very means of
life,

XI.

And Sleep must lie down arm'd, for the villainous
centre-bits
Grind on the wakeful ear in the hush of the moonless
nights,
While another is cheating the sick of a few last gasps,
as he sits
To pestle a poison'd poison behind his crimson lights.

XII.

When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a burial
fee,
And Timour-Mammon grins on a pile of children's
bones,
Is it peace or war? better, war! loud war by land and
by sea,
War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred
thrones.

XIII.

For I trust if an enemy's fleet came yonder round by
the hill,
And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker
out of the foam,
That the smooth-faced snubnosed rogue would leap
from his counter and till,

And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating
yardwand, home.—

XIV.

What ! am I raging alone as my father raged in his
mood ?

Must *I* too creep to the hollow and dash myself down
and die

Rather than hold by the law that I made, never more
to brood

On a horror of shatter'd limbs and a wretched
swindler's lie ?

XV.

Would there be sorrow for *me* ? there was *love* in the
passionate shriek,

Love for the silent thing that had made false haste to
the grave—

Wrapt in a cloak, as I saw him, and thought he would
rise and speak

And rave at the lie and the liar, ah God ! as he used
to rave.

XVI.

I am sick of the Hall and the hill, I am sick of the
moor and the main.

Why should I stay ? can a sweeter chance ever come
to me here ?

Oh, having the nerves of motion as well as the nerves
of pain,
Were it not wise if I fled from the place and the pit
and the fear?

XVII.

Workmen up at the Hall!—they are coming back
from abroad;
The dark old place will be gilt by the touch of a
millionnaire:
I have heard, I know not whence, of the singular
beauty of Maud;
I play'd with the girl when a child; she promised
then to be fair.

XVIII.

Maud with her venturous climbings and tumbles and
childish escapes,
Maud the delight of the village, the ringing joy of the
Hall,
Maud with her sweet purse-mouth when my father
dangled the grapes,
Maud the beloved of my mother, the moon-faced
darling of all,—

XIX.

What is she now? My dreams are bad. She may
bring me a curse.

No, there is fatter game on the moor ; she will let me alone.

Thanks, for the fiend best knows whether woman or man be the worse.

I will bury myself in myself, and the Devil may pipe to his own.

II.

LONG have I sigh'd for a calm : God grant I may find
it at last !

It will never be broken by Maud, she has neither
savour nor salt,

But a cold and clear-cut face, as I found when her
carriage past,

Perfectly beautiful : let it be granted her : where is
the fault ?

All that I saw (for her eyes were downcast, not to be
seen)

Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,
Dead perfection, no more ; nothing more, if it had
not been

For a chance of travel, a paleness, ~~an~~ hour's defect of
the rose,

Or an underlip, you may call it a little too ripe, too
full,

Or the least little delicate aquiline curve in a sensitive
nose,

From which I escaped heart-free, with the least little
touch of spleen.

III.

COLD and clear-cut face, why come you so cruelly
meek,
Breaking a slumber in which all spleenful folly was
drown'd,
Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash dead on the
cheek,
Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on a gloom
profound ;
Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for a transient
wrong
Done but in thought to your beauty, and ever as pale
as before
Growing and fading and growing upon me without a
sound,
Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike, half the night
long
Growing and fading and growing, till I could bear it
no more,
But arose, and all by myself in my own dark garden
ground,

Listening now to the tide in its broad-flung ship-wrecking roar,
Now to the scream of a madden'd beach dragg'd down by the wave,
Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghastly glimmer, and found
The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave.

IV.

I.

A MILLION emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime
In the little grove where I sit—ah, wherefore cannot
I be

Like things of the season gay, like the bountiful
season bland,

When the far-off sail is blown by the breeze of a
softer clime,

Half-lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of
sea,

The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the
land ?

II.

Below me, there, is the village, and looks how quiet
and small !

And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with gossip, scandal,
and spite ;

And Jack on his ale-house bench has as many lies as
a Czar ;

And here on the landward side, by a red rock,
glimmers the Hall ;
And up in the high Hall-garden I see her pass like
a light ;
But sorrow seize me if ever that light be my leading
star !

III.

When have I bow'd to her father, the wrinkled head
of the race ?

I met her to-day with her brother, but not to her
brother I bow'd :

I bow'd to his lady-sister as she rode by on the moor ;
But the fire of a foolish pride flash'd over her beauti-
ful face.

O child, you wrong your beauty, believe it, in being
so proud ;

Your father has wealth well-gotten, and I am nameless
and poor.

IV.

I keep but a man and a maid, ever ready to slander
and steal ;

I know it, and smile a hard-set smile, like a stoic, or
like

A wiser epicurean, and let the world have its way :
For nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher can
heal ;

The Mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow spear'd
by the shrike,
And the whole little wood where I sit is a world of
plunder and prey.

v.

We are puppets, Man in his pride, and Beauty fair in
her flower ;
Do we move ourselves, or are moved by an unseen
hand at a game
That pushes us off from the board, and others ever
succeed ?
Ah yet, we cannot be kind to each other here for an
hour ;
We whisper, and hint, and chuckle, and grin at a
brother's shame ;
However we brave it out, we men are a little breed.

VI.

A monstrous eft was of old the Lord and Master of
Earth,
For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing
ran,
And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's
crowning race.
As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe for
his birth,

So many a million of ages have gone to the making of
man :

He now is first, but is he the last? is he not too base?

VII.

The man of science himself is fonder of glory, and
vain,

An eye well-practised in nature, a spirit bounded and
poor;

The passionate heart of the poet is whirl'd into folly
and vice.

I would not marvel at either, but keep a temperate
brain;

For not to desire or admire, if a man could learn it,
were more

Than to walk all day like the sultan of old in a garden
of spice.

VIII.

For the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis hid by the
veil.

Who knows the ways of the world, how God will bring
them about?

Our planet is one, the suns are many, the world is
wide.

Shall I weep if a Poland fall? shall I shriek if a
Hungary fail?

Or an infant civilisation be ruled with rod or with
knout?

I have not made the world, and He that made it will
guide.

IX.

Be mine a philosopher's life in the quiet woodland
ways,

Where if I cannot be gay let a passionless peace be
my lot,

Far-off from the clamour of liars belied in the hubbub
of lies;

From the long-neck'd geese of the world that are ever
hissing dispraise

Because their natures are little, and, whether he heed
it or not,

Where each man walks with 'his head in a cloud of
poisonous flies.

X.

And most of all would I flee from the cruel madness
of love,

The honey of poison-flowers and all the measureless
ill.

Ah Maud, you milkwhite fawn, you are all unmeet for
a wife.

Your mother is mute in her grave as her image in
marble above ;

Your father is ever in London, you wander about at
your will ;

You have but fed on the roses, and lain in the lilies
of life.

V.

I.

A VOICE by the cedar tree,
In the meadow under the Hall !
She is singing an air that is known to me,
A passionate ballad gallant and gay,
A martial song like a trumpet's call !
Singing alone in the morning of life,
In the happy morning of life and of May,
Singing of men that in battle array,
Ready in heart and ready in hand,
March with banner and bugle and fife
To the death, for their native land.

II.

Maud with her exquisite face,
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny sky,
And feet like sunny gems on an English green,
Maud in the light of her youth and her grace,
Singing of Death, and of Honour that cannot die,
Till I well could weep for a time so sordid and mean,
And myself so languid and base.

III.

Silence, beautiful voice !
Be still, for you only trouble the mind
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,
A glory I shall not find.
Still ! I will hear you no more,
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a choice
But to move to the meadow and fall before
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,
Not her, not her, but a voice.

VI.

I.

MORNING arises stormy and pale,
No sun, but a wannish glare
In fold upon fold of hueless cloud,
And the budded peaks of the wood are bow'd
Caught and cuff'd by the gale :
I had fancied it would be fair.

II.

Whom but Maud should I meet
Last night, when the sunset burn'd
On the blossom'd gable-ends
At the head of the village street,
Whom but Maud should I meet ?
And she touch'd my hand with a smile so sweet,
She made me divine amends
For a courtesy not return'd.

III.

And thus a delicate spark
Of glowing and growing light
Thro' the livelong hours of the dark
Kept itself warm in the heart of my dreams,
Ready to burst in a colour'd flame ;
Till at last when the morning came
In a cloud, it faded, and seems
But an ashen-gray delight.

IV.

What if with her sunny hair,
And smile as sunny as cold,
She meant to weave me a snare
Of some coquettish deceit,
Cleopatra-like as of old
To entangle me when we met,
To have her lion roll in a silken net
And fawn at a victor's feet.

V.

Ah, what shall I be at fifty
Should Nature keep me alive,
If I find the world so bitter
When I am but twenty-five ?
Yet, if she were not a cheat,
If Maud were all that she seem'd,

And her smile were all that I dream'd,
Then the world were not so bitter
But a smile could make it sweet.

VI.

What if tho' her eye seem'd full
Of a kind intent to me,
What if that dandy-despot, he,
That jewell'd mass of millinery,
That oil'd and curl'd Assyrian Bull
Smelling of musk and of insolence,
Her brother, from whom I keep aloof,
Who wants the finer politic sense
To mask, tho' but in his own behoof,
With a glassy smile his brutal scorn—
What if he had told her yestermorn
How prettily for his own sweet sake
A face of tenderness might be feign'd,
And a moist mirage in desert eyes,
That so, when the rotten hustings shake
In another month to his brazen lies,
A wretched vote may be gain'd.

VII.

For a raven ever croaks, at my side,
Keep watch and ward, keep watch and ward,
Or thou wilt prove their tool.

MAUD.

Yea, too, myself from myself I guard,
For often a man's own angry pride
Is cap and bells for a fool.

VIII.

Perhaps the smile and tender tone
Came out of her pitying womanhood,
For am I not, am I not, here alone
So many a summer since she died,
My mother, who was so gentle and good?
Living alone in an empty house,
Here half-hid in the gleaming wood,
Where I hear the dead at midday moan,
And the shrieking rush of the wainscot mouse,
And my own sad name in corners cried,
When the shiver of dancing leaves is thrown
About its echoing chambers wide,
Till a morbid hate and horror have grown
Of a world in which I have hardly mixt,
And a morbid eating lichen fixt
On a heart half-turn'd to stone.

IX.

O heart of stone, are you flesh, and caught
By that you swore to withstand?
For what was it else within me wrought
But, I fear, the new strong wine of love,.

That made my tongue so stammer and trip
When I saw the treasured splendour, her hand,
Come sliding out of her sacred glove,
And the sunlight broke from her lip ?

x.

I have play'd with her when a child ;
She remembers it now we meet.
Ah well, well, well, I *may* be beguiled
By some coquettish deceit.
Yet, if she were not a cheat,
If Maud were all that she seem'd,
And her smile had all that I dream'd,
Then the world were not so bitter
But a smile could make it sweet.

VII.

I.

DID I hear it half in a doze
Long since, I know not where?
Did I dream it an hour ago,
When asleep in this arm-chair?

II.

Men were drinking together,
Drinking and talking of me ;
“ Well, if it prove a girl, the boy
Will have plenty : so let it be.”

III.

Is it an echo of something
Read with a boy’s delight,
Viziers nodding together
In some Arabian night?

IV.

Strange, that I hear two men,
Somewhere, talking of me ;
“ Well, if it prove a girl, my boy
Will have plenty : so let it be.”

VIII.

SHE came to the village church,
And sat by a pillar alone ;
An angel watching an urn
Wept over her, carved in stone ;
And once, but once, she lifted her eyes,
And suddenly, sweetly, strangely blush'd
To find they were met by my own ;
And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat stronger
And thicker, until I heard no longer
The snowy-banded, dilettante,
Delicate-handed priest intone ;
And thought, is it pride, and mused and sigh'd
“ No surely, now it cannot be pride.”

IX.

I WAS walking a mile,
More than a mile from the shore,
The sun look'd out with a smile
Betwixt the cloud and the moor,
And riding at set of day
Over the dark moor land,
Rapidly riding far away,
She waved to me with her hand.
There were two at her side,
Something flash'd in the sun,
Down by the hill I saw them ride,
In a moment they were gone :
Like a sudden spark
Struck vainly in the night,
Then returns the dark
With no more hope of light.

X.

I.

Sick, am I sick of a jealous dread ?
Was not one of the two at her side
This new-made lord, whose splendour plucks
The slavish hat from the villager's head ?
Whose old grandfather has lately died,
Gone to a blacker pit, for whom
Grimy nakedness dragging his trucks
And laying his trams in a poison'd gloom
Wrought, till he crept from a gutted mine
Master of half a servile shire,
And left his coal all turn'd into gold
To a grandson, first of his noble line,
Rich in the grace all women desire,
Strong in the power that all men adore,
And simper and set their voices lower,
And soften as if to a girl, and hold
Awe-stricken breaths at a work divine,
Seeing his gewgaw castle shiñe,

New as his title, built last year,
There amid perky larches and pine,
And over the sullen-purple moor
(Look at it) pricking a cockney ear.

II.

What, has he found my jewel out?
For one of the two that rode at her side
Bound for the Hall, I am sure was he:
Bound for the Hall, and I think for a bride.
Blithe would her brother's acceptance be.
Maud could be gracious too, no doubt
To a lord, a captain, a padded shape,
A bought commission, a waxen face,
A rabbit mouth that is ever agape—
Bought? what is it he cannot buy?
And therefore splenetic, personal, base,
A wounded thing with a rancorous cry,
At war with myself and a wretched race,
Sick, sick to the heart of life, am I.

III.

Last week came one to the county town,
To preach our poor little army down,
And play the game of the despot kings,
Tho' the state has done it and thrice as well:

This broad-brimm'd hawker of holy things,
Whose ear is cramm'd with his cotton, and rings
Even in dreams to the chink of his pence,
This huckster put down war ! can he tell
Whether war be a cause or a consequence ?
Put down the passions that make earth Hell !
Down with ambition, avarice, pride,
Jealousy, down ! cut off from the mind
The bitter springs of anger and fear ;
Down too, down at your own fireside,
With the evil tongue and the evil ear,
For each is at war with mankind.

IV.

I wish I could hear again
The chivalrous battle-song
That she warbled alone in her joy !
I might persuade myself then
She would not do herself this great wrong,
To take a wanton dissolute boy
For a man and leader of men.

V.

Ah God, for a man with heart, head, hand,
Like some of the simple great ones gone
For ever and ever by,

One still strong man in a blatant land,
Whatever they call him, what care I,
Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat—one
Who can rule and dare not lie.

VI.

And ah for a man to arise in me,
That the man I am may cease to be !

XI.

I.

O LET the solid ground
 Not fail beneath my feet
Before my life has found
 What some have found so sweet ;
Then let come what come may,
 What matter if I go mad,
I shall have had my day.

II.

Let the sweet heavens endure,
 Not close and darken above me
Before I am quite quite sure
 That there is one to love me ;
Then let come what come may
 To a life that has been so sad,
I shall have had my day.

XII.

I.

BIRDS in the high Hall-garden
When twilight was falling,
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,
They were crying and calling.

II.

Where was Maud? in our wood;
And I, who else, was with her,
Gathering woodland lilies,
Myriads blow together.

III.

Birds in our wood sang
Ringing thro' the valleys,
Maud is here, here, here
In among the lilies.

IV.

I kiss'd her slender hand,
She took the kiss sedately ;
Maud is not seventeen,
But she is tall and stately.

V.

I to cry out on pride
Who have won her favour !
O Maud were sure of Heaven
If lowliness could save her.

VI.

I know the way she went
Home with her maiden posy,
For her feet have touch'd the meadows
And left the daisies rosy.

VII.

Birds in the high Hall-garden
Were crying and calling to her,
Where is Maud, Maud, Maud,
One is come to woo her ?

VIII.

Look, a horse at the door,
And little King Charley snarling,
Go back, my lord, across the moor,
You are not her darling.

XIII.

I.

SCORN'D, to be scorn'd by one that I scorn,
Is that a matter to make me fret ?
That a calamity hard to be borne ?
Well, he may live to hate me yet.
Fool that I am to be vext with his pride !
I past him, I was crossing his lands ;
He stood on the path a little aside ;
His face, as I grant, in 'spite of spite,
Has a broad-blown comeliness, red and white,
And six feet two, as I think, he stands ;
But his essences turn'd the live air sick,
And barbarous opulence jewel-thick
Sunn'd itself on his breast and his hands.

II.

Who shall call me ungentle, unfair,
I long'd so heartily then and there

To give him the grasp of fellowship ;
But while I past he was humming an air,
Stopt, and then with a riding whip
Leisurely tapping a glossy boot,
And curving a contumelious lip,
Gorgonised me from head to foot
With a stony British stare.

III.

Why sits he here in his father's chair ?
That old man never comes to his place :
Shall I believe him ashamed to be seen ?
For only once, in the village street,
Last year, I caught a glimpse of his face,
A gray old wolf and a lean.
Scarcely, now, would I call him a cheat ;
For then, perhaps, as a child of deceit,
She might by a true descent be untrue ;
And Maud is as true as Maud is sweet :
Tho' I fancy her sweetness only due
To the sweeter blood by the other side ;
Her mother has been a thing complete,
However she came to be so allied.
And fair without, faithful within,
Maud to him is nothing akin :
Some peculiar mystic grace
Made her only the child of her mother,

And heap'd the whole inherited sin
On that huge scapegoat of the race,
All, all upon the brother.

IV.

Peace, angry spirit, and let him be !
Has not his sister smiled on me ?

XIV.

I.

MAUD has a garden of roses
And lilies fair on a lawn ;
There she walks in her state
And tends upon bed and bower,
And thither I climb'd at dawn
And stood by her garden-gate ;
A lion ramps at the top,
He is claspt by a passion-flower.

II.

Maud's own little oak-room
(Which Maud, like a precious stone
Set in the heart of the carven gloom,
Lights with herself, when alone
She sits by her music and books,

And her brother lingers late
 With a roystering company) looks
 Upon Maud's own garden gate :
 And I thought as I stood, if a hand, as white
 As ocean-foam in the moon, were laid
 On the hasp of the window, and my Delight
 Had a sudden desire, like a glorious ghost, to
 glide,
 Like a beam of the seventh Heaven, down to my
 side,
 There were but a step to be made.

III.

The fancy flatter'd my mind,
 And again seem'd overbold ;
 Now I thought that she cared for me,
 Now I thought she was kind
 Only because she was cold.

IV.

I heard no sound where I stood
 But the rivulet on from the lawn
 Running down to my own dark wood ;
 Or the voice of the long sea-wave as it swell'd
 Now and then in the dim-gray dawn ;
 But I look'd, and round, all round the house I
 beheld

The death-white curtain drawn ;
Felt a horror over me creep,
Prickle my skin and catch my breath,
Knew that the death-white curtain meant but sleep,
Yet I shudder'd and thought like a fool of the sleep
of death.

XV.

So dark a mind within me dwells,
And I make myself such evil cheer,
That if *I* be dear to some one else,
Then some one else may have much to fear ;
But if *I* be dear to some one else,
Then I should be to myself more dear.
Shall I not take care of all that I think,
Yea ev'n of wretched meat and drink,
If I be dear,
If I be dear to some one else.

XVI.

I.

THIS lump of earth has left his estate
The lighter by the loss of his weight ;
And so that he find what he went to seek,
And fulsome Pleasure clog him, and drown
His heart in the gross mud-honey of town,
He may stay for a year who has gone for a week :
But this is the day when I must speak,
And I see my Oread coming down,
O this is the day !
O beautiful creature, what am I
That I dare to look her way ;
Think I may hold dominion sweet,
Lord of the pulse that is lord of her breast,
And dream of her beauty with tender dread,
From the delicate Arab arch of her feet
To the grace that, bright and light as the crest
Of a peacock, sits on her shining head,
And she knows it not : O, if she knew it,
To know her beauty might half undo it.

I know it the one bright thing to save
My yet young life in the wilds of Time,
Perhaps from madness, perhaps from crime,
Perhaps from a selfish grave. .

II.

What, if she be fasten'd to this fool lord,
Dare I bid her abide by her word?
Should I love her so well if she
Had given her word to a thing so low?
Shall I love her as well if she
Can break her word were it even for me?
I trust that it is not so.

III.

Catch not my breath, O clamorous heart,
Let not my tongue be a thrall to my eye,
For I must tell her before we part,
I must tell her, or die.

XVII.

Go not, happy day,
From the shining fields,
Go not, happy day,
Till the maiden yields.
Rosy is the West,
Rosy is the South,
Roses are her cheeks,
And a rose her mouth.
When the happy Yes
Falters from her lips,
Pass and blush the news
Over glowing ships ;
Over blowing seas,
Over seas at rest,
Pass the happy news,
Blush it thro' the West ;
Till the red man dance
By his red cedar-tree,
And the red man's babe
Leap, beyond the sea.

Blush from West to East,
Blush from East to West,
Till the West is East,
Blush it thro' the West.
Rosy is the West,
Rosy is the South,
Roses are her cheeks,
And a rose her mouth.

XVIII.

I.

I HAVE led her home, my love, my only friend.
There is none like her, none.
And never yet so warmly ran my blood
And sweetly, on and on
Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for end,
Full to the banks, close on the promised good.

II.

None like her, none.
Just now the dry-tongued laurels' pattering talk
Seem'd her light foot along the garden walk,
And shook my heart to think she comes once more ;
But even then I heard her close the door,
The gates of Heav'n are closed, and she is gone.

III.

There is none like her, none.
Nor will be when our summers have deceased.
O, art thou sighing for Lebanon
In the long breeze that streams to thy delicious
East,
Sighing for Lebanon,
Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here increased,
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,
And looking to the South, and fed
With honey'd rain and delicate air,
And haunted by the starry head
Of her whose gentle will has changed my fate,
And made my life a perfumed altar-flame;
And over whom thy darkness must have spread
With such delight as theirs of old, thy great
Forefathers of the thornless garden, there
Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from whom she came.

IV.

Here will I lie, while these long branches sway,
And you fair stars that crown a happy day
Go in and out as if at merry play,
Who am no more so all forlorn,
As when it seem'd far better to be born
To labour and the mattock-harden'd hand,
Than nursed at ease and brought to understand

A sad astrology, the boundless plan
 That makes you tyrants in your iron skies;
 Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,
 Cold fires, yet with power to burn and brand
 His nothingness into man.

V.

But now shine on, and what care I,
 Who in this stormy gulf have found a pearl
 The countercharm of space and hollow sky,
 And do accept my madness, and would die
 To save from some slight shame one simple girl.

VI.

Would die ; for sullen-seeming Death may give
 More life to Love than is or ever was
 In our low world, where yet 'tis sweet to live.
 Let no one ask me how it came to pass ;
 It seems that I am happy, that to me
 A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,
 A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

VII.

Not die ; but live a life of truest breath,
 And teach true life to fight with mortal wrongs.
 O, why should Love, like men in drinking-songs,

Spice his fair banquet with the dust of death ?
Make answer, Maud my bliss,
Maud made my Maud by that long lover's kiss,
Life of my life, wilt thou not answer this ?
"The dusky strand of Death inwoven here
With dear Love's tie, makes Love himself more
dear."

VIII.

Is that enchanted moan only the swell
Of the long waves that roll in yonder bay ?
And hark the clock within, the silver knell
Of twelve sweet hours that past in bridal white,
And died to live, long as my pulses play ;
But now by this my love has closed her sight
And given false death her hand, and stol'n away
To dreamful wastes where footless fancies dwell
Among the fragments of the golden day.
May nothing there her maiden grace affright !
Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy spell.
My bride to be, my evermore delight,
My own heart's heart, my ownest own, farewell ;
It is but for a little space I go :
And ye meanwhile far over moor and fell
Beat to the noiseless music of the night !
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the glow
Of your soft splendours that you look so bright ?

I have climb'd nearer out of lonely Hell.
Beat, happy stars, timing with things below,
Beat with my heart more blest than heart can tell,
Blest, but for some dark undercurrent woe
That seems to draw—but it shall not be so :
Let all be well, be well.

XIX.

I.

HER brother is coming back to-night,
Breaking up my dream of delight.

II.

My dream ? do I dream of bliss ?
I have walk'd awake with Truth.
O when did a morning shine
So rich in atonement as this
For my dark-dawning youth,
Darken'd watching a mother decline
And that dead man at her heart and mine :
For who was left to watch her but I ?
Yet so did I let my freshness die.

III.

I trust that I did not talk
To gentle Maud in our walk
(For often in lonely wanderings

I have cursed him even to lifeless things)
But I trust that I did not talk,
Not touch on her father's sin :
I am sure I did but speak
Of my mother's faded cheek
When it slowly grew so thin,
That I felt she was slowly dying
Vext with lawyers and harass'd with debt :
For how often I caught her with eyes all wet,
Shaking her head at her son and sighing
A world of trouble within !

IV.

And Maud too, Maud was moved
To speak of the mother she loved
As one scarce less forlorn,
Dying abroad and it seems apart
From him who had ceased to share her heart,
And ever mourning over the feud,
The household Fury sprinkled with blood
By which our houses are torn :
How strange was what she said,
When only Maud and the brother
Hung over her dying bed—
That Maud's dark father and mine
Had bound us ~~one~~ to the other,
Betrothed us over their wine,
On the day when Maud was born ;

Seal'd her mine from her first sweet breath.
Mine, mine by a right, from birth till death,
Mine, mine—our fathers have sworn.

V.

But the true blood spilt had in it a heat
To dissolve the precious seal on a bond,
That, if left uncancell'd, had been so sweet :
And none of us thought of a something beyond,
A desire that awoke in the heart of the child,
As it were a duty done to the tomb,
To be friends for her sake, to be reconciled ;
And I was cursing them and my doom,
And letting a dangerous thought run wild
While often abroad in the fragrant gloom
Of foreign churches—I see her there,
Bright English lily, breathing a prayer
To be friends, to be reconciled !

VL

But then what a flint is he !
Abroad, at Florence, at Rome,
I find whenever she touch'd on me
This brother had laugh'd her down,
And at last, when each came home,
He had darken'd into a frown,
Chid her, and forbid her to speak
To me, her friend of the years before ;

And this was what had redd'n'd her cheek
When I bow'd to her on the moor.

VII.

Yet Maud, altho' not blind
To the faults of his heart and mind,
I see she cannot but love him,
And says he is rough but kind,
And wishes me to approve him,
And tells me, when she lay
Sick once, with a fear of worse,
That he left his wine and horses and play,
Sat with her, read to her, night and day,
And tended her like a nurse.

VIII.

Kind? but the deathbed desire
Spurn'd by this heir of the liar—
Rough but kind? yet I know
He has plotted against me in this,
That he plots against me still.
Kind to Maud? that were not amiss.
Well, rough but kind; why let it be so:
For shall not Maud have her will?

IX.

For, Maud, so tender and true, -
As long as my life endures

I feel I shall owe you a debt,
That I never can hope to pay ;
And if ever I should forget
That I owe this debt to you
And for your sweet sake to yours ;
O then, what then shall I say ?—
If ever I *should* forget,
May God make me more wretched
Than ever I have been yet !

X.

So now I have sworn to bury
All this dead body of hate,
I feel so free and so clear
By the loss of that dead weight,
That I should grow light-headed, I fear,
Fantastically merry ;
But that her brother comes, like a blight
On my fresh hope, to the Hall to-night.

XX.

I.

STRANGE, that I felt so gay,
Strange, that *I* tried to-day
To beguile her melancholy ;
The Sultan, as we name him,—
She did not wish to blame him—
But he vexed her and perplexed her
With his worldly talk and folly :
Was it gentle to reprove her
For stealing out of view
From a little lazy lover
Who but claims her as his due ?
Or for chilling his caresses
By the coldness of her manners,
Nay, the plainness of her dresses ?
Now I know her but in two,
Nor can pronounce upon it
If one should ask me whether
The habit, hat, and feather,
Or the frock and gipsy bonnet
Be the neater and completer ;

For nothing can be sweeter
Than maiden Maud in either.

II.

But to-morrow, if we live,
Our ponderous squire will give
A grand political dinner
To half the squirelings near ;
And Maud will wear her jewels,
And the bird of prey will hover,
And the titmouse hope to win her
With his chirrup at her ear.

III.

A grand political dinner
To the men of many acres,
A gathering of the Tory,
A dinner and then a dance
For the maids and marriage-makers,
And every eye but mine will glance
At Maud in all her glory.

IV.

For I am not invited,
But, with the Sultan's pardon,
I am all as well delighted,
For I know her own rose-garden,
And mean to linger in it.

Till the dancing will be over ;
And then, oh then, come out to me
For a minute, but for a minute,
Come out to your own true lover,
That your true lover may see
Your glory also, and render
All homage to his own darling,
Queen Maud in all her splendour.

XXI.

RIVULET crossing my ground,
And bringing me down from the Hall
This garden-rose that I found,
Forgetful of Maud and me,
And lost in trouble and moving round
Here at the head of a tinkling fall,
And trying to pass to the sea ;
O Rivulet, born at the Hall,
My Maud has sent it by thee
(If I read her sweet will right)
On a blushing mission to me,
Saying in odour and colour, “ Ah, be
Among the roses to-night.”

XXII.

I.

COME into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone ;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the rose is blown.

II.

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

III.

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon ;
All night has the casement jessamine stir'd
To the dancers dancing in tune ;

Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

IV.

I said to the lily, "There is but one
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone ?
She is weary of dance and play."
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day ;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

V.

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,
" For ever and ever, mine."

VI.

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the music clash'd in the hall ;
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all ;

VII.

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

VIII.

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree ;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea ;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me ;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

IX.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one ;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

X.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear ;
She is coming, my life, my fate ;
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near ;"
And the white rose weeps, "She is late ;"
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear ;"
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

XI.

She is coming, my own, my sweet ;
Were it ever so'airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed ;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead ;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

M A U D.

PART II.

I.

I.

“THE fault was mine, the fault was mine”—
Why am I sitting here so stunn’d and still,
Plucking the harmless wild-flower on the hill?—
It is this guilty hand!—
And there rises ever a passionate cry
From underneath in the darkening land—
What is it, that has been done?
O dawn of Eden bright over earth and sky,
The fires of Hell brake out of thy rising sun,
The fires of Hell and of Hate;
For she, sweet soul, had hardly spoken a word,
When her brother ran in his rage to the gate,
He came with the babe-faced lord;
Heaped on her terms of disgrace,
And while she wept, and I strove to be cool,

He fiercely gave me the lie,
Till I with as fierce an anger spoke,
And he struck me, madman, over the face,
Struck me before the languid fool,
Who was gaping and grinning by :
Struck for himself an evil stroke ;
Wrought for his house an irredeemable woe ;
For front to front in an hour we stood,
And a million horrible bellowing echoes broke
From the red-ribb'd hollow behind the wood,
And thunder'd up into Heaven the Christless code,
That must have life for a blow.
Ever and ever afresh they seem'd to grow.
Was it he lay there with a fading eye ?
“The fault was mine,” he whisper'd, “fly !”
Then glided out of the joyous wood
The ghastly Wraith of one that I know ;
And there rang on a sudden a passionate cry,
A cry for a brother's blood :
It will ring in my heart and my ears, till I die, till I
die.

II.

Is it gone ? my pulses beat—
What was it ? a lying trick of the brain ?
Yet I thought I saw her stand,
A shadow there at my feet,
High over the shadowy land.

It is gone ; and the heavens fall in a gentle rain,
When they should burst and drown with deluging
storms

The feeble vassals of wine and anger and lust,
The little hearts that know not how to forgive ;
Arise, my God, and strike, for we hold Thee just,
Strike dead the whole weak race of venomous worms,
That sting each other here in the dust ;
We are not worthy to live.

II.

I.

SEE what a lovely shell,
Small and pure as a pearl,
Lying close to my foot,
Frail, but a work divine,
Made so fairly well
With delicate spire and whorl,
How exquisitely minute,
A miracle of design !

II.

What is it ? a learned man
Could give it a clumsy name.
Let him name it who can,
The beauty would be the same.

III.

The tiny cell is forlorn,
Void of the little living will
That made it stir on the shore.

Did he stand at the diamond door
 Of his house in a rainbow frill ?
 Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,
 A golden foot or a fairy horn
 Thro' his dim water-world ?

IV.

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap
 Of my finger-nail on the sand,
 Small, but a work divine,
 Frail, but of force to withstand,
 Year upon year, the shock
 Of cataract seas that snap
 The three-decker's oaken spine
 Athwart the ledges of rock,
 Here on the Breton strand !

V.

Breton, not Briton ; here
 Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast
 Of ancient fable and fear—
 Plagued with a flitting to and fro,
 A disease, a hard mechanic ghost
 That never came from on high
 Nor ever arose from below,
 But only moves with the moving eye,
 Flying along the land and the main—
 Why should it look like Maud ?

Am I to be overawed
 By what I cannot but know
 Is a juggle born of the brain?

VI.

Back from the Breton coast,
 Sick of a nameless fear,
 Back to the dark sea-line
 Looking, thinking of all I have lost ;
 An old song vexes my ear ;
 But that of Lamech is mine.

VII.

For years, a measureless ill,
 For years, for ever, to part—
 But she, she would love me still ;
 And as long, O God, as she
 Have a grain of love for me,
 So long, no doubt, no doubt,
 Shall I nurse in my dark heart,
 However weary, a spark of will
 Not to be trampled out.

VIII.

Strange, that the mind, when fraught
 With a passion so intense
 One would think that it well
 Might drown all life in the eye,—

That it should, by being so overwrought,
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense
For a shell, or a flower, little things
Which else would have been past by !
And now I remember, I,
When he lay dying there,
I noticed one of his many rings
(For he had many, poor worm) and thought
It is his mother's hair.

IX

Who knows if he be dead ?
Whether I need have fled ?
Am I guilty of blood ?
However this may be,
Comfort her, comfort her, all things good,
While I am over the sea !
Let me and my passionate love go by,
But speak to her all things holy and high,
Whatever happen to me !
Me and my harmful love go by ;
But come to her waking, find her asleep,
Powers of the height, Powers of the deep,
And comfort her tho' I die.

III.

COURAGE, poor heart of stone !
I will not ask thee why
Thou canst not understand
That thou art left for ever alone :
Courage, poor stupid heart of stone.—
Or if I ask thee why,
Care not thou to reply :
She is but dead, and the time is at hand
When thou shalt more than die.

IV.

I.

O THAT 'twere possible
After long grief and pain
To find the arms of my true love
Round me once again !

II.

When I was wont to meet her
In the silent woody places
By the home that gave me birth,
We stood tranced in long embraces
Mixt with kisses sweeter sweeter
Than anything on earth.

III.

A shadow flits before me,
Not thou, but like to thee :
Ah Christ, that it were possible
For one short hour to see
The souls we loved, that they might tell us
What and where they be.

IV.

It leads me forth at evening,
It lightly winds and steals
In a cold white robe before me,
When all my spirit reels
At the shouts, the leagues of lights,
And the roaring of the wheels.

V.

Half the night I waste in sighs,
Half in dreams I sorrow after
The delight of early skies ;
In a wakeful doze I sorrow
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,
For the meeting of the morrow,
The delight of happy laughter,
The delight of low replies.

VI.

’Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And a dewy splendour falls
On the little flower that clings
To the turrets and the walls ;
’Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And the light and shadow fleet ;
She is walking in the meadow,
And the woodland echo rings ;
In a moment we shall meet ;

She is singing in the meadow
And the rivulet at her feet
Ripples on in light and shadow
To the ballad that she sings.

VII.

Do I hear her sing as of old,
My bird with the shining head,
My own dove with the tender eye?
But there rings on a sudden a passionate cry,
There is some one dying or dead,
And a sullen thunder is roll'd ;
For a tumult shakes the city,
And I wake, my dream is fled ;
In the shuddering dawn, behold,
Without knowledge, without pity,
By the curtains of my bed
That abiding phantom cold.

VIII.

Get thee hence, nor come again,
Mix not memory with doubt,
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,
Pass and cease to move about !
'Tis the blot upon the brain
That *will* show itself without..

IX.

Then I rise, the eavedrops fall,
And the yellow vapours choke
The great city sounding wide ;
The day comes, a dull red ball
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke
On the misty river-tide.

X.

Thro' the hubbub of the market
I steal, a wasted frame,
It crosses here, it crosses there,
Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,
The shadow still the same ;
And on my heavy eyelids
My anguish hangs like shame.

XI.

Alas for her that met me,
That heard me softly call,
Came glimmering thro' the laurels
At the quiet evenfall,
In the garden by the turrets
Of the old manorial hall.

XII.

Would the happy spirit descend,
From the realms of light and song,

In the chamber or the street,
As she looks among the blest,
Should I fear to greet my friend
Or to say "forgive the wrong,"
Or to ask her, "Take me, sweet,
To the regions of thy rest?"

XIII.

But the broad light glares and beats,
And the shadow flits and fleets
And will not let me be ;
And I loathe the squares and streets,
And the faces that one meets,
Hearts with no love for me :
Always I long to creep
Into some still cavern deep,
There to weep, and weep, and weep
My whole soul out to thee.

V.

I.

DEAD, long dead,
Long dead !
And my heart is a handful of dust,
And the wheels go over my head,
And my bones are shaken with pain,
For into a shallow grave they are thrust,
Only a yard beneath the street,
And the hoofs of the horses beat, beat,
The hoofs of the horses beat,
Beat into my scalp and my brain,
With never an end to the stream of passing feet,
Driving, hurrying, marrying, burying,
Clamour and rumble, and ringing and clatter,
And here beneath it is all as bad,
For I thought the dead had peace, but it is
so ;
To have no peace in the grave, is that not sad ?

But up and down and to and fro,
Ever about me the dead men go ;
And then to hear a dead man chatter
Is enough to drive one mad.

II.

Wretchedest age, since Time began,
They cannot even bury a man ;
And tho' we paid our tithes in the days that are
gone,
Not a bell was rung, not a prayer was read ;
It is that which makes us loud in the world of the
dead ;
There is none that does his work, not one ;
A touch of their office might have sufficed,
But the churchmen fain would kill their church,
As the churches have kill'd their Christ.

III.

See, there is one of us sobbing,
No limit to his distress ;
And another, a lord of all things, praying
To his own great self, as I guess ;
And another, a statesman there, betraying
His party-secret, fool, to the press ;
And yonder a vile physician, blabbing

The case of his patient—all for what?
To tickle the maggot born in an empty head,
And wheedle a world that loves him not,
For it is but a world of the dead.

IV.

Nothing but idiot gabble !
For the prophecy given of old
And then not understood,
Has come to pass as foretold ;
Not let any man think for the public good,
But babble, merely for babble.
For I never whisper'd a private affair
Within the hearing of cat or mouse,
No, not to myself in the closet alone,
But I heard it shouted at once from the top of the
house ;
Everything came to be known
Who told *him* we were there ?

V.

Not that gray old wolf, for he came not back
From the wilderness, full of wolves, where he used to
lie ;
He has gather'd the bones for his o'ergrown whelp to
crack ;
Crack them now for yourself, and howl, and die.

VI.

Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,
And curse me the British vermin, the rat,
I know not whether he came in the Hanover ship,
But I know that he lies and listens mute
In an ancient mansion's crannies and holes :
Arsenic, arsenic, sure, would do it,
Except that now we poison our babes, poor souls !
It is all used up for that.

VII.

Tell him now : she is standing here at my head ;
Not beautiful now, not even kind ;
He may take her now ; for she never speaks her
mind,
But is ever the one thing silent here.
She is not of us, as I divine ;
She comes from another stiller world of the dead, .
Stiller, not fairer than mine.

VIII.

But I know where a garden grows,
Fairer than aught in the world beside,
All made up of the lily and rose
That blow by night, when the season is good,
To the sound of dancing music and flutes :
It is only flowers, they had no fruits,

And I almost fear they are not roses, but blood ;
For the keeper was one, so full of pride,
He linkt a dead man there to a spectral bride ;
For he, if he had not been a Sultan of brutes,
Would he have that hole in his side ?

IX.

But what will the old man say ?
He laid a cruel snare in a pit
To catch a friend of mine one stormy day ;
Yet now I could even weep to think of it ;
For what will the old man say
When he comes to the second corpse in the pit ?

X.

Friend, to be struck by the public foe,
Then to strike him and lay him low,
That were a public merit, far,
Whatever the Quaker holds, from sin ;
But the red life spilt for a private blow—
I swear to you, lawful and lawless war
Are scarcely even akin.

XI.

O me, why have they not buried me deep enough ?
Is it kind to have made me a' grave so rough,
Me, that was never a quiet sleeper ?

Maybe still I am but half-dead ;
Then I cannot be wholly dumb ;
I will cry to the steps above my head
And somebody, surely, some kind heart will come
To bury me, bury me
Deeper, ever so little deeper.

M A U D.

PART III.

VI.

I.

My life has crept so long on a broken wing
Thro' cells of madness, haunts of horror and fear,
That I come to be grateful at last for a little thing :
My mood is changed, for it fell at a time of year
When the face of night is fair on the dewy downs,
And the shining daffodil dies, and the Charioteer
And starry Gemini hang like glorious crowns
Over Orion's grave low down in the west,
That like a silent lightning under the stars
She seem'd to divide in a dream from a band of the
blest,
And spoke of a hope for the world in the coming
wars—

“ And in that hope, dear soul, let trouble have rest,
Knowing I tarry for thee,” and pointed to Mars
As he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the Lion's breast.

II.

And it was but a dream, yet it yielded a dear delight
To have look'd, tho' but in a dream, upon eyes so fair,
That had been in a weary world my one thing bright ;
And it was but a dream, yet it lighten'd my despair
When I thought that a war would arise in defence of
the right,

That an iron tyranny now should bend or cease,
The glory of manhood stand on his ancient height,
Nor Britain's one sole God be the millionaire :
No more shall commerce be all in all, and Peace
Pipe on her pastoral hillock a languid note,
And watch her harvest ripen, her herd increase,
Nor the cannon-bullet rust on a slothful shore,
And the cobweb woven across the cannon's throat
Shall shake its threaded tears in the wind no more.

III.

And as months ran on and rumour of battle grew,
“It is time, it is time, O passionate heart,” said I
(For I cleaved to a cause that I felt to be pure and
true),
“It is time, O passionate heart and morbid eye,
That old hysterical mock-disease should die.”
And I stood on a giant deck and mix'd my breath
With a loyal people shouting a battle cry,

Till I saw the dreary phantom arise and fly
Far into the North, and battle, and seas of death.

IV.

Let it go or stay, so I wake to the higher aims
Of a land that has lost for a little her lust of gold,
And love of a peace that was full of wrongs and
shames,
Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to be told ;
And hail once more to the banner of battle unroll'd !
Tho' many a light shall darken, and many shall weep
For those that are crush'd in the clash of jarring
claims,
Yet God's just wrath shall be wreak'd on a giant liar ;
And many a darkness into the light shall leap,
And shine in the sudden making of splendid names,
And noble thought be freer under the sun,
And the heart of a people beat with one desire ;
For the peace, that I deem'd no peace, is over and
done,
And now by the side of the Black and the Baltic deep,
And deathful-grinning mouths of the fortress, flames
The blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire.

V.

Let it flame or fade, and the war roll down like a
wind,

We have proved we have hearts in a cause, we are
noble still,

And myself have awaked, as it seems, to the better
mind ;

It is better to fight for the good than to rail at the ill ;
I have felt with my native land, I am one with my
kind,

I embrace the purpose of God, and the doom
assign'd.

ENOCH ARDEN.

ENOCH ARDEN.

LONG lines of cliff breaking have left a chasm ;
And in the chasm are foam and yellow sands ;
Beyond, red roofs about a narrow wharf
In cluster ; then a moulder'd church ; and higher
A long street climbs to one tall-tower'd mill ;
And high in heaven behind it a gray down
With Danish barrows ; and a hazelwood,
By autumn nutters haunted, flourishes
Green in a cuplike hollow of the down.

Here on this beach a hundred years ago,
Three children of three houses, Annie Lee,
The prettiest little damsel in the port,
And Philip Ray the miller's only son,
And Enoch Arden, a rough sailor's lad

Made orphan by a winter shipwreck, play'd
Among the waste and lumber of the shore,
Hard coils of cordage, swarthy fishing-nets,
Anchors of rusty fluke, and boats updrawn ;
And built their castles of dissolving sand
To watch them overflow'd, or following up
And flying the white breaker, daily left
The little footprint daily wash'd away.

A narrow cave ran in beneath the cliff :
In this the children play'd at keeping house.
Enoch was host one day, Philip the next,
While Annie still was mistress ; but at times
Enoch would hold possession for a week :
“This is my house and this my little wife.”
“Mine too” said Philip “turn and turn about :”
When, if they quarrell'd, Enoch stronger-made
Was master : then would Philip, his blue eyes
All flooded with the helpless wrath of tears,
Shriek out “I hate you, Enoch,” and at this
The little wife would weep for company,
And pray them not to quarrel for her sake,
And say she would be little wife to both.

But when the dawn of rosy childhood past,
And the new warmth of life's ascending sun
Was felt by either, either fixt his heart
On that one girl ; and Enoch spoke his love,

But Philip loved in silence ; and the girl
Seem'd kinder unto Philip than to him ;
But she loved Enoch ; tho' she knew it not,
And would if ask'd deny it. Enoch set
A purpose evermore before his eyes,
To hoard all savings to the uttermost,
To purchase his own boat, and make a home
For Annie : and so prosper'd that at last
A luckier or a bolder fisherman,
A carefuller in peril, did not breathe
For leagues along that breaker-beaten coast
Than Enoch. Likewise had he served a year
On board a merchantman, and made himself
Full sailor ; and he thrice had pluck'd a life
From the dread sweep of the down-streaming seas :
And all men look'd upon him favourably :
And ere he touched his one-and-twentieth May
He purchased his own boat, and made a home
For Annie, neat and nestlike, halfway up
The narrow street that clamber'd toward the mill.

Then, on a golden autumn eventide,
The younger people making holiday,
With bag and sack and basket, great and small,
Went nutting to the hazels. Philip stay'd
(His father lying sick and needing him)
An hour behind ; but as he climb'd the hill,
Just where the prone edge of the wood began

To feather toward the hollow, saw the pair,
Enoch and Annie, sitting hand-in-hand,
His large gray eyes and weather-beaten face
All-kindled by a still and sacred fire,
That burn'd as on an altar. Philip look'd,
And in their eyes and faces read his doom ;
Then, as their faces drew together, groan'd,
And slipt aside, and like a wounded life
Crept down into the hollows of the wood ;
There, while the rest were loud in merrymaking,
Had his dark hour unseen, and rose and past
Bearing a lifelong hunger in his heart.

So these were wed, and merrily rang the bells,
And merrily ran the years, seven happy years,
Seven happy years of health and competence,
And mutual love and honourable toil ;
With children ; first a daughter. In him woke,
With his first babe's first cry, the noble wish
To save all earnings to the uttermost,
And give his child a better bringing-up
Than his had been, or hers ; a wish renew'd,
When two years after came a boy to be
The rosy idol of her solitudes,
Whilé Enoch was abroad on wrathful seas,
Or often journeying landward ; for in truth
Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's ocean-spoil
In ocean-smelling osier, and his face,

Rough-redden'd with a thousand winter gales,
Not only to the market-cross were known,
But in the leafy lanes behind the down,
Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp,
And peacock-yewtree of the lonely Hall,
Whose Friday fare was Enoch's ministering.

Then came a change, as all things human change.
Ten miles to northward of the narrow port
Open'd a larger haven : thither used
Enoch at times to go by land or sea ;
And once when there, and clambering on a mast
In harbour, by mischance he slipt and fell :
A limb was broken when they lifted him ;
And while he lay recovering there, his wife
Bore him another son, a sickly one :
Another hand crept too across his trade
Taking her bread and theirs : and on him fell,
Altho' a grave and staid God-fearing man,
Yet lying thus inactive, doubt and gloom.
He seem'd, as in a nightmare of the night,
To see his children leading evermore
Low miserable lives of hand-to-mouth,
And her, he loved, a beggar : then he pray'd
"Save them from this, whatever comes to me."
And while he pray'd, the master of that ship
Enoch had served in, hearing his mischance,
Came, for he knew the man and valued him,

Reporting of his vessel China-bound,
And wanting yet a boatswain. Would he go ?
There yet were many weeks before she sail'd,
Sail'd from this port. Would Enoch have the
place ?

And Enoch all at once assented to it,
Rejoicing at that answer to his prayer.

So now that shadow of mischance appear'd
No graver than as when some little cloud
Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun,
And isles a light in the offing : yet the wife—
When he was gone—the children—what to do ?
Then Enoch lay long-pondering on his plans ;
To sell the boat—and yet he loved her well—
How many a rough sea had he weather'd in her !
He knew her, as a horseman knows his horse—
And yet to sell her—then with what she brought
Buy goods and stores—set Annie forth in trade
With all that seamen needed or their wives—
So might she keep the house while he was gone.
Should he not trade himself out yonder ? go
This voyage more than once ? yea twice or thrice—
As oft as needed—last, returning rich,
Become the master of a larger craft,
With fuller profits lead an easier life,
Have all his pretty young ones educated,
And pass his days in peace among his own.

Thus Enoch in his heart determined all :
Then moving homeward came on Annie pale,
Nursing the sickly babe, her latest-born.
Forward she started with a happy cry,
And laid the feeble infant in his arms ;
Whom Enoch took, and handled all his limbs,
Appraised his weight and fondled fatherlike,
But had no heart to break his purposes
To Annie, till the morrow, when he spoke.

Then first since Enoch's golden ring had girt
Her finger, Annie fought against his will :
Yet not with brawling opposition she.
But manifold entreaties, many a tear,
Many a sad kiss by day by night renew'd
(Sure that all evil would come out of it)
Besought him, supplicating, if he cared
For her or his dear children, not to go.
He not for his own self caring but her,
Her and her children, let her plead in vain ;
So grieving held his will, and bore it thro'.

For Enoch parted with his old sea-friend,
Bought Annie goods and stores, and set his hand
To fit their little streetward sitting-room
With shelf and corner for the goods and stores.
So all day long till Enoch's last at home,
Shaking their pretty cabin, hammer and axe,

Auger and saw, while Annie seem'd to hear
Her own death-scaffold raising, shrill'd and rang,
Till this was ended, and his careful hand,—
The space was narrow,—having order'd all
Almost as neat and close as Nature packs
Her blossom or her seedling, paused ; and he,
Who needs would work for Annie to the last,
Ascending tired, heavily slept till morn.

And Enoch faced this morning of farewell
Brightly and boldly. All his Annie's fears,
Save, as his Annie's, were a laughter to him.
Yet Enoch as a brave God-fearing man
Bow'd himself down, and in that mystery
Where God-in-man is one with man-in-God,
Pray'd for a blessing on his wife and babes
Whatever came to him : and then he said
“ Annie, this voyage by the grace of God
Will bring fair weather yet to all of us.
Keep a clean hearth and a clear fire for me,
For I'll be back, my girl, before you know it.”
Then lightly rocking baby's cradle “ and he,
This pretty, puny, weakly little one,—
Nay—for I love him all the better for it—
God bless him, he shall sit upon my knees
And I will tell him tales of foreign parts,
And make him merry, when I come home again.
Come, Annie, come, cheer up before I go.”

Him running on thus hopefully she heard,
 And almost hoped herself; but when he turn'd
 The current of his talk to graver things
 In sailor fashion roughly sermonizing
 On providence and trust in Heaven, she heard,
 Heard and not heard him; as the village girl,
 Who sets her pitcher underneath the spring,
 Musing on him that used to fill it for her,
 Hears and not hears, and lets it overflow.

At length she spoke "O Enoch, you are wise;
 And yet for all your wisdom well know I
 That I shall look upon your face no more."

"Well then," said Enoch, "I shall look on yours.
 Annie, the ship I sail in passes here
 (He named the day), get you a seaman's glass,
 Spy out my face, and laugh at all your fears."

But when the last of those last moments came,
 "Annie, my girl, cheer up, be comforted,
 Look to the babes, and till I come again
 Keep everything shipshape, for I must go.
 And fear no more for me; or if you fear
 Cast all your cares on God; that anchor holds.
 Is He not yonder in those uttermost
 Parts of the morning? if I flee to these
 Can I go from Him? and the sea is His,

The sea is His : He made it."

Enoch rose,
Cast his strong arms about his drooping wife,
And kiss'd his wonder-stricken little ones ;
But for the third, the sickly one, who slept
After a night of feverous wakefulness,
When Annie would have raised him Enoch said
"Wake him not ; let him sleep ; how should the child
Remember this ?" and kiss'd him in his cot.
But Annie from her baby's forehead clipt
A tiny curl, and gave it : this he kept
Thro' all his future ; but now hastily caught
His bundle, waved his hand, and went his way.

She when the day, that Enoch mention'd, came,
Borrow'd a glass, but all in vain : perhaps
She could not fix the glass to suit her eye ;
Perhaps her eye was dim, hand tremulous ;
She saw him not : and while he stood on deck
Waving, the moment and the vessel past.

Ev'n to the last dip of the vanishing sail
She watch'd it, and departed weeping for him ;
Then, tho' she mourned his absence as his grave,
Set her sad will no less to chime with his,
But threw not in her trade, not being bred
To barter, nor compensating the want

By shrewdness, neither capable of lies,
Nor asking overmuch and taking less,
And still foreboding "what would Enoch say?"
For more than once, in days of difficulty
And pressure, had she sold her wares for less
Than what she gave in buying what she sold :
She fail'd and sadden'd knowing it ; and thus,
Expectant of that news which never came,
Gain'd for her own a scanty sustenance,
And lived a life of silent melancholy.

Now the third child was sickly-born and grew
Yet sicklier, tho' the mother cared for it
With all a mother's care : nevertheless,
Whether her business often call'd her from it,
Or thro' the want of what it needed most,
Or means to pay the voice who best could tell
What most it needed—howsoe'er it was,
After a lingering,—ere she was aware,—
Like the caged bird escaping suddenly,
The little innocent soul flitted away.

In that same week when Annie buried it,
Philip's true heart, which hunger'd for her peace
(Since Enoch left he had not look'd upon her),
Smote him, as having kept aloof so long.
"Surely," said Philip, "I may see her now,
May be some little comfort ;" therefore went,

Past thro' the solitary room in front,
Paused for a moment at an inner door,
Then struck it thrice, and, no one opening,
Enter'd ; but Annie, seated with her grief,
Fresh from the burial of her little one,
Cared not to look on any human face,
But turn'd her own toward the wall and wept.
Then Philip standing up said falteringly
“Annie, I came to ask a favour of you.”

He spoke ; the passion in her moan'd reply
“Favour from one so sad and so forlorn
As I am !” half abash'd him ; yet unask'd,
His bashfulness and tenderness at war,
He set himself beside her, saying to her :

“I came to speak to you of what he wish'd,
Enoch, your husband : I have ever said
You chose the best among us—a strong man :
For where he fixt his heart he set his hand
To do the thing he will'd, and bore it thro'.
And wherefore did he go this weary way,
And leave you lonely ? not to see the world—
For pleasure ?—nay, but for the wherewithal
To give his babes a better bringing-up
Than his had been, or yours : that was his wish.
And if he come again, vext will he be
To find the precious morning hours were lost.

And it would vex him even in his grave,
If he could know his babes were running wild
Like colts about the waste. So, Annie, now—
Have we not known each other all our lives ?
I do beseech you by the love you bear
Him and his children not to say me nay—
For, if you will, when Enoch comes again
Why then he shall repay me—if you will,
Annie—for I am rich and well-to-do.
Now let me put the boy and girl to school :
This is the favour that I came to ask.”

Then Annie with her brows against the wall
Answer'd “ I cannot look you in the face ;
I seem so foolish and so broken down.
When you came in my sorrow broke me down ;
And now I think your kindness breaks me down ;
But Enoch lives ; that is borne in on me :
He will repay you : money can be repaid ;
Not kindness such as yours.”

And Philip ask'd
“ Then you will let me, Annie ? ”

There she turn'd,
She rose, and fixt her swimming eyes upon him,
And dwelt a moment on his kindly face,
Then calling down a blessing on his head
Caught at his hand, and wrung it passionately,

And past into the little garth beyond.
So lifted up in spirit he moved away.

Then Philip put the boy and girl to school,
And bought them needful books, and everyway,
Like one who does his duty by his own,
Made himself theirs ; and tho' for Annie's sake,
Fearing the lazy gossip of the port,
He oft denied his heart his dearest wish,
And seldom crost her threshold, yet he sent
Gifts by the children, garden-herbs and fruit,
The late and early roses from his wall,
Or conies from the down, and now and then,
With some pretext of fineness in the meal
To save the offence of charitable, flour
From his tall mill that whistled on the waste.

But Philip did not fathom Annie's mind :
Scarce could the woman when he came upon her,
Out of full heart and boundless gratitude
Light on a broken word to thank him with.
But Philip was her children's all-in-all ;
From distant corners of the street they ran
To greet his hearty welcome heartily ;
Lords of his house and of his mill were they ;
Worried his passive ear with petty wrongs
Or pleasures, hung upon him, play'd with him
And call'd him Father Philip. Philip gain'd

As Enoch lost ; for Enoch seem'd to them
Uncertain as a vision or a dream,
Faint as a figure seen in early dawn
Down at the far end of an avenue,
Going we know not where : and so ten years,
Since Enoch left his hearth and native land,
Fled forward, and no news of Enoch came.

It chanced one evening Annie's children long'd
To go with others, nutting to the wood,
And Annie would go with them ; then they begg'd
For Father Philip (as they call'd him) too :
Him, like the working bee in blossom-dust,
Blanch'd with his mill, they found ; and saying to him
"Come with us Father Philip" he denied ;
But when the children pluck'd at him to go,
He laugh'd, and yielded readily to their wish,
For was not Annie with them ? and they went.

But after scaling half the weary down,
Just where the prone edge of the wood began
To feather toward the hollow, all her force
Fail'd her ; and sighing, "Let me rest" she said :
So Philip rested with her well-content ;
While all the younger ones with jubilant cries
Broke from their elders, and tumultuously
Down thro' the whitening hazels made a plunge
To the bottom, and dispersed, and bent or broke

The lithe reluctant boughs to tear away
Their tawny clusters, crying to each other
And calling, here and there, about the wood.

But Philip sitting at her side forgot
Her presence, and remember'd one dark hour
Here in this wood, when like a wounded life
He crept into the shadow: at last he said,
Lifting his honest forehead, "Listen, Annie,
How merry they are down yonder in the wood.
Tired, Annie?" for she did not speak a word.
"Tired?" but her face had fall'n upon her hands;
At which, as with a kind of anger in him,
"The ship was lost," he said, "the ship was lost!
No more of that! why should you kill yourself
And make them orphans quite?" And Annie said
"I thought not of it: but—I know not why—
Their voices make me feel so solitary."

Then Philip coming somewhat closer spoke.
"Annie, there is a thing upon my mind,
And it has been upon my mind so long,
That tho' I know not when it first came there,
I know that it will out at last. O Annie,
It is beyond all hope, against all chance,
That he who left you ten long years ago
Should still be living; well then—let me speak:
I grieve to see you poor and wanting help:

I cannot help you as I wish to do
Unless—they say that women are so quick—
Perhaps you know what I would have you know—
I wish you for my wife. I fain would prove
A father to your children : I do think
They love me as a father : I am sure
That I love them as if they were mine own ;
And I believe, if you were fast my wife,
That after all these sad uncertain years,
We might be still as happy as God grants
To any of His creatures. Think upon it :
For I am well-to-do—no kin, no care,
No burthen, save my care for you and yours :
And we have known each other all our lives,
And I have loved you longer than you know.”

Then answer'd Annie ; tenderly she spoke :
“ You have been as God's good angel in our house.
God bless you for it, God reward you for it,
Philip, with something happier than myself.
Can one love twice? can you be ever loved
As Enoch was? what is it that you ask ? ”
“ I am content ” he answer'd “ to be loved
A little after Enoch.” “ O ” she cried,
Scared as it were, “ dear Philip, wait a while :
If Enoch comes—but Enoch will not come—
Yet wait a year, a year is not so long :
Surely I shall be wiser in a year :

O wait a little !” Philip sadly said
“ Annie, as I have waited all my life
I well may wait a little.” “ Nay” she cried
“ I am bound : you have my promise—in a year :
Will you not bide your year as I bide mine ?”
And Philip answer’d “ I will bide my year.”

Here both were mute, till Philip glancing up
Beheld the dead flame of the fallen day
Pass from the Danish barrow overhead ;
Then fearing night and chill for Annie, rose
And sent his voice beneath him thro’ the wood.
Up came the children laden with their spoil ;
Then all descended to the port, and there
At Annie’s door he paused and gave his hand,
Saying gently “ Annie, when I spoke to you,
That was your hour of weakness. I was wrong,
I am always bound to you, but you are free.”
Then Annie weeping answer’d “ I am bound.”

She spoke ; and in one moment as it were,
While yet she went about her household ways,
Ev’n as she dwelt upon his latest words,
That he had loved her longer than she knew,
That autumn into autumn flash’d again,
And there he stood once more before her face,
Claiming her promise. “ Is it a year ?” she ask’d.
“ Yes, if the nuts ” he said “ be ripe again :

Come out and see." But she—she put him off—
So much to look to—such a change—a month—
Give her a month—she knew that she was bound—
A month—no more. Then Philip with his eyes ~~✓~~
Full of that lifelong hunger, and his voice
Shaking a little like a drunkard's hand,
"Take your own time, Annie, take your own time."
And Annie could have wept for pity of him ;
And yet she held him on delayingly
With many a scarce-believable excuse,
Trying his truth and his long-sufferance,
Till half-another year had slipt away.

By this the lazy gossips of the port,
Abhorrent of a calculation crost,
Began to chafe as at a personal wrong.
Some thought that Philip did but trifle with her ;
Some that she but held off to draw him on ;
And others laugh'd at her and Philip too,
As simple folk that knew not their own minds,
And one, in whom all evil fancies clung
Like serpent eggs together, laughingly
Would hint at worse in either. Her own son
Was silent, tho' he often look'd his wish ;
But evermore the daughter prest upon her
To wed the man so dear to all of them
And lift the household out of poverty ;
And Philip's rosy face contracting grew

Careworn and wan : and all these things fell on her
Sharp as reproach.

At last one night it chanced
That Annie could not sleep, but earnestly
Pray'd for a sign "my Enoch is he gone?"
Then compass'd round by the blind wall of night
Brook'd not the expectant terror of her heart,
Started from bed, and struck herself a light,
Then desperately seized the holy Book,
Suddenly set it wide to find a sign,
Suddenly put her finger on the text,
"Under the palm-tree." That was nothing to her :
No meaning there : she closed the Book and slept :
When lo ! her Enoch sitting on a height,
Under a palm-tree, over him the Sun :
"He is gone," she thought, "he is happy, he is
singing
Hosanna in the highest : yonder shines
The Sun of Righteousness, and these be palms
Whereof the happy people strowing cried
'Hosanna in the highest !'" Here she woke,
Resolved, sent for him and said wildly to him
"There is no reason why we should not wed."
"Then for God's sake," he answer'd, "both our sakes,
So you will wed me, let it be at once."

So these were wed and merrily rang the bells,

Merrily rang the bells and they were wed.
But never merrily beat Annie's heart.
A footstep seem'd to fall beside her path,
She knew not whence ; a whisper on her ear,
She knew not what ; nor loved she to be left
Alone at home, nor ventured out alone.
What ail'd her then, that ere she entered, often
Her hand dwelt lingeringly on the latch,
Fearing to enter : Philip thought he knew :
Such doubts and fears were common to her state,
Being with child : but when her child was born,
Then her new child was as herself renew'd,
Then the new mother came about her heart,
Then her good Philip was her all-in-all,
And that mysterious instinct wholly died.

And where was Enoch ? prosperously sail'd
The ship "Good Fortune," tho' at setting forth
The Biscay, roughly ridging eastward, shook
And almost overwhelm'd her, yet unvext
She slipt across the summer of the world,
Then after a long tumble about the Cape
And frequent interchange of foul and fair,
She passing thro' the summer world again,
The breath of heaven came continually
And sent her sweetly by the golden isles,
Till silent in her oriental haven.

There Enoch traded for himself, and bought
Quaint monsters for the market of those times,
A gilded dragon, also, for the babes.

Less lucky her home-voyage : at first indeed
Thro' many a fair sea-circle, day by day,
Scarce-rocking, her full-busted figure-head
Stared o'er the ripple feathering from her bows :
Then follow'd calms, and then winds variable,
Then baffling, a long course of them ; and last
Storm, such as drove her under moonless heavens
Till hard upon the cry of "breakers" came
The crash of ruin, and the loss of all
But Enoch and two others. Half the night,
Buoy'd upon floating tackle and broken spars,
These drifted, stranding on an isle at morn
Rich, but the loneliest in a lonely sea.

No want was there of human sustenance,
Soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nourishing roots ;
Nor save for pity was it hard to take
The helpless life so wild that it was tame.
There in a seaward-gazing mountain-gorge
They built, and thatch'd with leaves of palm, a hut,
Half hut, half native cavern. So the three,
Set in this Eden of all plenteousness,
Dwelt with eternal summer, ill-content.

For one, the youngest, hardly more than boy,
Hurt in that night of sudden ruin and wreck,
Lay lingering out a five-years' death-in-life.
They could not leave him. After he was gone,
The two remaining found a fallen stem ;
And Enoch's comrade, careless of himself,
Fire-hollowing this in Indian fashion, fell
Sun-stricken, and that other lived alone.
In those two deaths he read God's warning "wait."

The mountain wooded to the peak, the lawns
And winding glades high up like ways to Heaven,
The slender coco's drooping crown of plumes,
The lightning flash of insect and of bird,
The lustre of the long convolvulus
That coil'd around the stately stems, and ran
Ev'n to the limit of the land, the glows
And glories of the broad belt of the world,
All these he saw ; but what he fain had seen
He could not see, the kindly human face,
Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard
The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-fowl,
The league-long roller thundering on the reef,
The moving whisper of huge trees that branch'd
And blossom'd in the zenith, or the sweep
Of some precipitous rivulet to the wave,
As down the shore he ranged, or all day long
Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,

A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a sail :
No sail from day to day, but every day
The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts
Among the palms and ferns and precipices ;
The blaze upon the waters to the east ;
The blaze upon his island overhead ;
The blaze upon the waters to the west ;
Then the great stars that globed themselves in
Heaven,
The hollower-bellowing ocean, and again
The scarlet shafts of sunrise—but no sail.

There often as he watch'd or seem'd to watch,
So still, the golden lizard on him paused,
A phantom made of many phantoms moved
Before him haunting him, or he himself
Moved haunting people, things and places, known
Far in a darker isle beyond the line ;
The babes, their babble, Annie, the small house,
The climbing street, the mill, the leafy lanes,
The peacock-yewtree and the lonely Hall,
The horse he drove, the boat he sold, the chill
November dawns and dewy-glooming downs,
The gentle shower, the smell of dying leaves,
And the low moan of leaden-colour'd seas.

Once likewise, in the ringing of his ears,
Tho' faintly, merrily—far and far away—

He heard the pealing of his parish bells ;
Then, tho' he knew not wherefore, started up
Shuddering, and when the beauteous hateful isle
Return'd upon him, had not his poor heart
Spoken with That, which being everywhere
Lets none, who speaks with Him, seem all alone,
Surely the man had died of solitude.

Thus over Enoch's early-silvering head
The sunny and rainy seasons came and went
Year after year. His hopes to see his own,
And pace the sacred old familiar fields,
Not yet had perish'd, when his lonely doom
Came suddenly to an end. Another ship
(She wanted water) blown by baffling winds,
Like the Good Fortune, from her destined course,
Stay'd by this isle, not knowing where she lay :
For since the mate had seen at early dawn
Across a break on the mist-wreathen isle
The silent water slipping from the hills,
They sent a crew that landing burst away
In search of stream or fount, and fill'd the shores
With clamour. Downward from his mountain gorge
Stept the long-hair'd long-bearded solitary,
Brown, looking hardly human, strangely clad,
Muttering and mumbling, idiotlike it seem'd,
With inarticulate rage, and making signs
They knew not what : and yet he led the way

To where the rivulets of sweet water ran ;
And ever as he mingled with the crew,
And heard them talking, his long-bounden tongue
Was loosen'd, till he made them understand ;
Whom, when their casks were fill'd they took aboard :
And there the tale he utter'd brokenly,
Scarce-credited at first but more and more,
Amazed and melted all who listen'd to it :
And clothes they gave him and free passage home ;
But oft he work'd among the rest and shook
His isolation from him. None of these
Came from his country, or could answer him,
If question'd, aught of what he cared to know.
And dull the voyage was with long delays,
The vessel scarce sea-worthy ; but evermore
His fancy fled before the lazy wind
Returning, till beneath a clouded moon
He like a lover down thro' all his blood
Drew in the dewy meadowy morning-breath
Of England, blown across her ghostly wall :
And that same morning officers and men
Levied a kindly tax upon themselves,
Pitying the lonely man, and gave him it :
Then moving up the coast they landed him,
Ev'n in that harbour whence he sail'd before.

There Enoch spoke no word to any one,
But homeward—home—what home? had he a home?

His home, he walk'd. Bright was that afternoon,
 Sunny but chill ; till drawn thro' either chasm,
 Where either haven open'd on the deeps,
 Roll'd a sea-haze and whelm'd the world in gray ;
 Cut off the length of highway on before,
 And left but narrow breadth to left and right
 Of wither'd holt or tilth or pasturage.
 On the nigh-naked tree the robin piped
 Disconsolate, and thro' the dripping haze
 The dead weight of the dead leaf bore it down :
 Thicker the drizzle grew, deeper the gloom ;
 Last, as it seem'd, a great mist-blotted light
 Flared on him, and he came upon the place.

Then down the long street having slowly stolen,
 His heart foreshadowing all calamity,
 His eyes upon the stones, he reach'd the home
 Where Annie lived and loved him, and his babes
 In those far-off seven happy years were born ;
 But finding neither light nor murmur there
 (A bill of sale gleam'd thro' the drizzle) crept
 Still downward thinking "dead or dead to me !"

Down to the pool and narrow wharf he went,
 Seeking a tavern which of old he knew,
 A front of timber-crost antiquity,
 So propt, worm-eaten, ruinously old,
 He thought it must have gone ; but he was gone

Who kept it ; and his widow Miriam Lane,
With daily-dwindling profits held the house ;
A haunt of brawling seamen once, but now
Stiller, with yet a bed for wandering men.
There Enoch rested silent many days.

But Miriam Lane was good and garrulous,
Nor let him be, but often breaking in,
Told him, with other annals of the port,
Not knowing—Enoch was so brown, so bow'd,
So broken—all the story of his house.
His baby's death, her growing poverty,
How Philip put her little ones to school,
And kept them in it, his long wooing her,
Her slow consent, and marriage, and the birth
Of Philip's child : and o'er his countenance
No shadow past, nor motion : any one,
Regarding, well had deem'd he felt the tale
Less than the teller : only when she closed
“Enoch, poor man, was cast away and lost”
He, shaking his gray head pathetically,
Repeated muttering “cast away and lost ;”
Again in deeper inward whispers “lost !”

But Enoch yearn'd to see her face again ;
“If I might look on her sweet face again
And know that she is happy.” So the thought
Haunted and harass'd him, and drove him forth,

At evening when the dull November day
Was growing duller twilight, to the hill.
There he sat down gazing on all below ;
There did a thousand memories roll upon him,
Unspeakable for sadness. By and by
The ruddy square of comfortable light,
Far-blazing from the rear of Philip's house,
Allured him, as the beacon-blaze allures
The bird of passage, till he madly strikes
Against it, and beats out his weary life.

For Philip's dwelling fronted on the street,
The latest house to landward ; but behind,
With one small gate that open'd on the waste,
Flourish'd a little garden square and wall'd :
And in it thrrove an ancient evergreen,
A yewtree, and all round it ran a walk
Of shingle, and a walk divided it :
But Enoch shunn'd the middle walk and stole
Up by the wall, behind the yew ; and thence
That which he better might have shunn'd, if griefs
Like his have worse or better, Enoch saw.

For cups and silver on the burnish'd board
Sparkled and shone : so genial was the hearth :
And on the right hand of the hearth he saw
Philip, the slighted suitor of old times,
Stout, rosy, with his babe across his knees ;

And o'er her second father stoopt a girl,
A later but a loftier Annie Lee,
Fair-hair'd and tall, and from her lifted hand
Dangled a length of ribbon and a ring
To tempt the babe, who rear'd his creasy arms,
Caught at and ever miss'd it, and they laugh'd :
And on the left hand of the hearth he saw
The mother glancing often toward her babe,
But turning now and then to speak with him,
Her son, who stood beside her tall and strong,
And saying that which pleased him, for he smiled.

Now when the dead man come to life beheld
His wife his wife no more, and saw the babe
Hers, yet not his, upon the father's knee,
And all the warmth, the peace, the happiness,
And his own children tall and beautiful,
And him, that other, reigning in his place,
Lord of his rights and of his children's love,—
Then he, tho' Miriam Lane had told him all,
Because things seen are mightier than things heard,
Stagger'd and shook, holding the branch, and fear'd
To send abroad a shrill and terrible cry,
Which in one moment, like the blast of doom,
Would shatter all the happiness of the hearth.

He therefore turning softly like a thief,
Lest the harsh shingle should grate underfoot;

And feeling all along the garden-wall,
Lest he should swoon and tumble and be found,
Crept to the gate, and open'd it, and closed,
As lightly as a sick man's chamber-door,
Behind him, and came out upon the waste.

And there he would have knelt, but that his knees
Were feeble, so that falling prone he dug
His fingers into the wet earth, and pray'd.

“Too hard to bear ! why did they take me thence?
O God Almighty, blessed Saviour, Thou
That didst uphold me on my lonely isle,
Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness
A little longer ! aid me, give me strength
Not to tell her, never to let her know.
Help me not to break in upon her peace.
My children too ! must I not speak to these ?
They know me not. I should betray myself.
Never : No father's kiss for me—the girl
So like her mother, and the boy, my son.”

There speech and thought and nature fail'd a little,
And he lay tranced ; but when he rose and paced
Back toward his solitary home again,
All down the long and narrow street he went
Beating it in upon his weary brain,

As tho' it were the burthen of a song,
"Not to tell her, never to let her know."

He was not all unhappy. His resolve
Upbore him, and firm faith, and evermore
Prayer from a living source within the will,
And beating up thro' all the bitter world,
Like fountains of sweet water in the sea,
Kept him a living soul. "This miller's wife"
He said to Miriam "that you spoke about,
Has she no fear that her first husband lives?"
"Ay, ay, poor soul" said Miriam, "fear enow!
If you could tell her you had seen him dead,
Why, that would be her comfort;" and he thought
"After the Lord has call'd me she shall know,
I wait His time," and Enoch set himself,
Scorning an alms, to work whereby to live.
Almost to all things could he turn his hand.
Cooper he was and carpenter, and wrought
To make the boatmen fishing-nets, or help'd
At lading and unlading the tall barks
That brought the stinted commerce of those days;
Thus earn'd a scanty living for himself:
Yet since he did but labour for himself,
Work without hope, there was not life in it
Whereby the man could live; and as the year
Roll'd itself round again to meet the day
"When Enoch had return'd, a languor came

Upon him, gentle sickness, gradually
Weakening the man, till he could do no more,
But kept the house, his chair, and last his bed.
And Enoch bore his weakness cheerfully.
For sure no gladlier does the stranded wreck
See thro' the gray skirts of a lifting squall
The boat that bears the hope of life approach
To save the life despair'd of, than he saw
Death dawning on him, and the close of all.

For thro' that dawning gleam'd a kindlier hope
On Enoch thinking "after I am gone,
Then may she learn I loved her to the last."»
He call'd aloud for Miriam Lane and said
"Woman, I have a secret—only swear,
Before I tell you—swear upon the book
Not to reveal it, till you see me dead."
"Dead," clamour'd the good woman, "hear him talk !
I warrant, man, that we shall bring you round."
"Swear" added Enoch sternly "on the book."
And on the book, half-frighted, Miriam swore.
Then Enoch rolling his gray eyes upon her,
"Did you know Enoch Arden of this town?"
"Know him?" she said "I knew him far away.
Ay, ay, I mind him coming down the street ;
Held his head high, and cared for no man, he."
Slowly and sadly Enoch answer'd her ;
"His head is low, and no man cares for him.

I think I have not three days more to live ;
I am the man.” At which the woman gave
A half-incredulous, half-hysterical cry.

“ You Arden, you ! nay,—sure he was a foot
Higher than you be.” Enoch said again
“ My God has bow’d me down to what I am ;
My grief and solitude have broken me ;
Nevertheless, know you that I am he
Who married—but that name has twice been
changed—

I married her who married Philip Ray.
Sit, listen.” Then he told her of his voyage,
His wreck, his lonely life, his coming back,
His gazing in on Annie, his resolve,
And how he kept it. As the woman heard,
Fast flow’d the current of her easy tears,
While in her heart she yearn’d incessantly
To rush abroad all round the little haven,
Proclaiming Enoch Arden and his woes ;
But awed and promise-bounden she forbore,
Saying only “ See your bairns before you go !
Eh, let me fetch ’em, Arden ? ” and arose
Eager to bring them down, for Enoch hung
A moment on her words, but then replied :

“ Woman, disturb me not now at the last,
But let me hold my purpose till I die.
Sit down again ; mark me and understand,

While I have power to speak. I charge you now,
When you shall see her, tell her that I died
Blessing her, praying for her, loving her ;
Save for the bar between us, loving her
As when she laid her head beside my own.
And tell my daughter Annie, whom I saw
So like her mother, that my latest breath
Was spent in blessing her and praying for her.
And tell my son that I died blessing him.
And say to Philip that I blest him too ;
He never meant us anything but good.
But if my children care to see me dead,
Who hardly knew me living, let them come,
I am their father ; but she must not come,
For my dead face would vex her after-life.
And now there is but one of all my blood
Who will embrace me in the world-to-be :
This hair is his : she cut it off and gave it,
And I have borne it with me all these years,
And thought to bear it with me to my grave ;
But now my mind is changed, for I shall see him,
My babe in bliss : wherefore when I am gone,
Take, give her this, for it may comfort her :
It will moreover be a token to her,
That I am he."

He ceased ; and Miriam Lane
Made such a voluble answer promising all,

That once again he roll'd his eyes upon her
Repeating all he wish'd, and once again
She promised.

Then the third night after this,
While Enoch slumber'd motionless and pale,
And Miriam watch'd and dozed at intervals,
There came so loud a calling of the sea,
That all the houses in the haven rang.
He woke, he rose, he spread his arms abroad
Crying with a loud voice "A sail ! a sail !
I am saved ;" and so fell back and spoke no more.

So past the strong heroic soul away.
And when they buried him the little port
Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.